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BOROUGH OF MONTGOMERY.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH - YEAR 1956.

Montgomery Borough Council, 1956. - Mayor (Councillor E. L. Griffiths)
Aldermen J. D. K. Lloyd and A. Reg. Jones
Councillors W. H. Gornall, G.W. Jellings, R. W. P. Humphreys and A. Parrett, and D.P. Davies.
Town Clerk (Philip E. Jones, D.P.A.)

Medical Officer of Health - I. B. Millar, M.D., (Belf.) M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., (Belf.) D.P.H. (Belf)

Borough Surveyor and Public Health Inspector - Frederick Hunt - Cert. S.I.B. M.R. San.I., M.R.I. P.H.H.

To the Montgomery Borough Council.

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

I have pleasure in submitting my Annual Report for 1956 which has been drawn up with due regard to the Welsh Board of Health Circulars on this subject, No. 19/56 (Wales).

The Vital Statistics show that the Borough has achieved that happy combination of statistics, a high birth rate and low death rate including a low infant death rate. In fact, the increase in the Borough's population is almost entirely due to the number of births. This truism is worth making if only to emphasise that Montgomery in common with the rest of mid-Wales is inclined to suffer from depopulation of its youth. A predominantly agricultural population may accept this as traditionally inevitable, but one might be forgiven for pondering the salutary effects upon at least the vital statistics of such a population, of an injection of one or two light industries with perhaps some overspill population for good measure.

A reference is made in this report to the great need for a properly controlled sewage disposal works for the town. Any hope of attracting new ratepayers or other interested parties to the town must be qualified rather sharply by this deficiency. Meanwhile the open sewers maintain a constant threat of infection.

During the year the designation of our Sanitary Inspector was changed to the more appropriate title of Public Health Inspector. This change is in keeping with the gradual evolution which has been taking place from the nineteenth century Inspector pioneering in a very necessary but limited field to his present counterpart whose duties have become so many and diverse. In fact they are now so much greater that the Council may have to consider the advisability of increasing its staff to deal with them in the detail they deserve.

I should like to thank him for his assistance in the preparation of part of this report.

I am,
Yours faithfully,

I. B. MILLAR.

Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.

GENERAL STATISTICS OF THE AREA.

Area of District - 3,390 acres.
Estimated Mid-Year Population - 860.
Number of Inhabited houses 321
(according to Rate Books)
Rateable Value - £5,960.
Sum represented by a penny rate - £22. 17. 4.

VITAL STATISTICS.

POPULATION- The mid-1956 figure of 860 is 20 more than the mid-1955 estimate.

LIVE BIRTHS - Legitimate: Male 10
" Female 15
Total 25

NOTE: 16 of these births(6 male 10 female) took place in the Borough.

Crude Birth Rate: 29·1 births per 1000 total population.
Corrected Birth Rate(for age and sex): 32.27 births per 1000 total population(compared with provisional figures of 15·6 per 1000 total population for England and Wales and for Wales alone in 1956 and 15·0 for Montgomeryshire).

STILLBIRTHS: NIL.
INFANT MORTALITY: NIL.

DEATHS: Male 7. Female 1, Total 8.

CRUDE DEATH RATES: 9·3 per 1000 total population.

CORRECTED DEATH RATES (for age and sex) 7·72 per 1000 total population (compared with the provisional rate of 11·7 for England and Wales, 12·4 for Wales and 12·19 for Montgomeryshire).

CAUSES OF DEATH BY SEX AND AGE:

Malignant Neoplasm Colon, Male 1 (aged over 90 years)
Female 1 (aged 70-80 years)
Other Malignant Neoplasm, Male 1 (aged 70-80 years)
Vascular Lesions of the nervous system, Male 1 (70 - 80 years)
Coronary Disease, Male 3 (2 aged 70-80 years and 1 (aged 60-70 yrs)
Suicide, Male (aged 60-70 years) TOTAL DEATHS 8.

SECTION B. Local Health Services.

The County Medical Officer is responsible for the arrangements dealing with the Personal Health Services of the area.

SECTION C. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

(1) WATER - Although the year was by no means a wet one there was no shortage of water, and no special measures had to be introduced in order to reduce consumption. Owing to the fact that a considerable amount of water was wasted during the previous year, through the bursting(and not by any means for the first time)of a very old and worn out three inch water main, estimates of the cost of re-newing this pipe were obtained.

The Ministry Department approved and instructions were given for laying a new main in cement asbestos pipe, together with a meter and the necessary sluice valves.

The Council also decided to instal water meters to the supply pipes of all agricultural properties in the area, the School and School Canteen, and property on which a slaughter-house was situated. Estimates for the cost of so doing were obtained, and instructions were given for the work to be carried out. All water supplied is chlorinated.

The Town Water was laid on to two new houses which were built and to four existing cottages which were modernised.

(11)(a) DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE - It has not been possible to proceed with the work of providing a modern sewage works to take the place of the existing highly insanitary and dangerous method of disposing of the Town sewage.

At present (and this has been the case for very many years), the crude sewage is discharged direct into two open ditches, one at each end of the Town. Plans for abating this continuing nuisance have been before the Ministry Department for a considerable time, their Engineering Officials have inspected the primitive method of disposal of the sewage, but sanction to proceed with the work of constructing suitable works to deal with the nuisance cannot be obtained. It is understood that the Credit Restrictions are responsible for the hold-up.

In the meantime, cattle from a large T.T.Herd continue to drink from a grossly polluted stream. During the year, four more cottages, mentioned above, have been connected to the sewers.

(b) RIVERS AND STREAMS - Apart from the action proposed above under "Drainage and Sewerage", steps were taken to ensure that the Sewage Disposal Plant on the Council's Housing Estate was kept in good working order, and that a good quality effluent was discharged into a running stream.

(111) CLOSET ACCOMMODATION - During the year, three conversions were made from conservancy to water carriage system. Owing to lack of sewage disposal facilities, conversions are not being encouraged.

(1V) PUBLIC CLEANSING - No change. Domestic refuse is collected once a fortnight, and so is night soil from such premises where the conservancy system is still in use. Disinfections carried out during the year - Four.

(V) SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA - The District has been inspected systematically and at intervals as required, and where defects have been found, these have been remedied by informal action.

(V1) SHOPS AND OFFICES - All shops and offices have been inspected under the provisions of the Shops Act, 1934, and the Public Health Act, 1936. All were in satisfactory condition, and no action was necessary.

(V11) CAMPING SITES - No sites were in use for camping purposes during the year.

(V111) SMOKE ABATEMENT - Fortunately, nuisance from smoke does not occur in the area, so no action was necessary during the year.

(1X) SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS - There are none in the area.

Over:-

(X) ERADICATION OF BED BUGS - The District is fortunate, as not a single dwelling is infested with bed bugs.

(XI) SCHOOLS - The only school in the area has modern amenities, and conditions are satisfactory. A new Canteen is at present being built, to take the place of premises now being used temporarily as a Canteen.

SECTION D. HOUSING.

1. INSPECTION OF DWELLINGS DURING THE YEAR.

(1) (a) Total number of houses inspected for housing defects (under the Public Health or Housing Acts) - 20
(b) Number of Inspections made for the purpose - 25

(2) (a) Number of Dwelling Houses (included under sub-head (1) above, which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932. NIL.
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose. NIL.

(3) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation. NIL.

(4) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head), found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation. 12.

2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING THE YEAR WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES.

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authoritity or their Officers:- 5

3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR.

(a) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10, and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.
(1) Number of dwellings in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs:- NIL.

(b) Proceedings under the Public Health Acts.
(11) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied:- NIL.

(c) Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936.
(1) Number of houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made:- NIL.
(11) Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders. NIL.

(d) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.
(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made. NIL.
(11) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or underground room having been made fit. NIL.

4. HOUSING ACT, 1936 - PART IV - OVERCROWDING.

(a) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year - NIL.
(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year. NIL.
(c) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year- NIL.
(d) Cases in which dwelling houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding:- NIL.

NEW HOUSES.

During the year, two new houses were built on the Chirbury Road by Private Enterprise, for agricultural workers, and the subsidy provided for under the provisions of the Housing Act, 1949, was granted.

No Council Houses were built during the year.

HOUSING ACT, 1949 - PART 11 - IMPROVEMENT GRANTS.

Number of dwellings brought up to standard during the year - 6
Plans, etc., are being prepared in a number of other cases.

SECTION E. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MILK SUPPLY - The duties of supervising methods of Milk Production at Farms, and the inspection of premises used in connection with milk production, are carried out by the County Agricultural Executive Committee on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. However, so far as distribution by Retailers is concerned, supervision is exercised, and there were no complaints during the year.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS - There is only one small slaughter-house in the District, and this is kept in a satisfactory condition. All shops and vans, from which food is sold or distributed, are regularly visited, and during the year, all were kept in a cleanly state.

CARCASES INSPECTED FROM 1ST JANUARY TO 31ST DECEMBER, 1956.

	Cattle, excluding cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep & Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed.	205	Nil.	5	1502	301
Number Inspected	140	Nil.	5	1230	260.
All diseases except Tuberculosis. Whole carcases condemned.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned.	22	Nil.	Nil.	67	Nil.
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis.	15.71	Nil.	Nil.	5.44	Nil.
Tuberculosis only. Whole carcases condemned.	NIl.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.

No meat marking scheme under Part 111 of the Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924, is in force in the District.

Over:-

SECTION F. INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONTROL.

There were 37 notifications during the year, 33 of them relating to whooping cough which occurred as a small epidemic in the first quarter of the year, mostly in unimmunized children.

The distribution of the cases by age and sex is as follows:-

Whooping Cough.	Male.	Female.
Under 1 year	1	3
1-2 years		3
2-3 years	1	1
3-4 years	2	2
4-5 years		1
Total under 5 years	4	10
5-6 years	5	1
6-7 years	1	5
7-8 years	3	
8-9 years	1	3
Total 5-10 years	10	9
TOTALS	14	19
Measles. Under 1 year	1	
Erysipelas - aged 56 years	1	1
Non Pulmonary Tuberculosis - aged 35 years		1
TOTALS	16	21

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